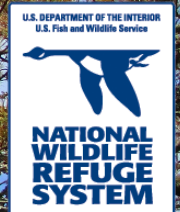


JULY 16-29, 2018

ISSUE 4

MONOMOY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



Biweekly Newsletter

Alyssa Pool/USFWS



USFWS

A horseshoe crab

SUMMER IS FLYING BY

Just like every year, summer seems to be passing by at a rate too fast to comprehend! August is upon us, and with it comes the hint of fall and returning to school and responsibilities. However, the summer is not yet over. There is still plenty of time to visit Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, walk our trails, do some bird watching, and go fishing or clamming.

Everyone at the visitor center is happy to answer your questions and help plan your time at Monomoy.

VOLUNTEER SHOUT OUT

This week, we're sending our thanks to volunteer Mary Doucette! Mary is a volunteer with the Friends of Monomoy who staffs the visitor center twice per week. This summer is her first season volunteering at Monomoy, and she has done a fantastic job engaging visitors! She is a student at Eckerd College in Florida pursuing a double-major in environmental studies and sociology with a minor in biology. Mary is passionate about volunteerism and the environment, as she volunteers with the Dennis Conservation Trust and Eastham Wildcare in addition to Monomoy. In her free time Mary enjoys roller skating, writing poetry, and walking trails outdoors. Thanks Mary!



Alyssa Pool/USFWS

Mary hard at work

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

The Results Are in!

After analyzing the data from our June tern census, we are pleased to report that there were 13,472 nests in the colony this year; almost 2,000 more than last year, and over 9,000 more than in 2009! Once again, Monomoy holds the distinction of having the largest tern colony on the Eastern Seaboard. There were also 30 roseate tern nests this year, which is an increase from 18 nests in 2017.

The tern chicks that hatched just weeks ago, along with their parents, are staging in preparation for their migration to overwinter in South America. The fledglings are practicing to fly and feed themselves before they traverse the globe on their first migration.



USFWS

Terns flying overhead during the census



Adam Ells/USFWS

Semipalmated plovers and other peeps forage the mud flats

Fall Migrants Passing Through

While we can still hang on to the last month of summer, for birds it is time for fall migration. Birds that were nesting in the arctic earlier in the season are on their way to their southern overwintering sites and stopping at Monomoy along the way. Dowitchers, godwits, whimbrels, turnstones, and more are all hanging out on Monomoy for a rest stop in their migration. A visit to the refuge provides a chance for you to see these transient birds yourself. As a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network Regional Site, Monomoy hosts thousands of fall migrants annually.

Seabeach Amaranth

Last year, refuge staff and partners planted 2,000 seeds of the federally threatened seabeach amaranth plant on South Monomoy Island. On July 20th, staff conducted a survey of the area. One out of the 14 plots checked had amaranth present, and the number of plants in this plot increased from 387 plants last year to 446 this year. Most of the plants are concentrated in a small area, so they will crowd each other out as they continue to grow. Many of the plots experienced overwash in the 2017 planting season, which may be a factor in the limited regrowth this year. However, the presence of plants in this season is encouraging and will help to maintain fresh seeds in the seeds banks into the future. Staff will continue monitoring in the coming years.



Nichole Nuttall/USFWS

Seabeach amaranth growing on South Monomoy

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

Northeastern Beach Tiger Beetle

On July 29th refuge staff surveyed the northeastern beach tiger beetle on South Monomoy Island. They walked the entire length of the island, counting beetles as they progressed. During the survey, staff counted over 2,100 individual beetles. This survey helps us to know that our refuge population is continuing to thrive.

The northeastern beach tiger beetle is a threatened species, and the population on South Monomoy Island is one of only two populations north of Chesapeake Bay. The northeastern beach tiger beetle is an indicator species of a healthy beach environment.



USFWS

Northeastern beach tiger beetle



USFWS

Piping plover

Piping Plovers

Just like the terns, piping plovers are now preparing to migrate south. Plovers have been seen using Minimoy and South Beach to stage for their migration, and more will be using the Monomoy Islands soon.

There were a total of 36 pairs of piping plovers nesting this season on Monomoy. While surveying for the remaining nesting birds, staff will also identify migrant plovers and look for field readable bands to identify previously banded birds.

Monomoy Management Talk

On July 18th, refuge biologist Kate Iaquinto spoke at the second Friends of Monomoy Summer Series Talk of the season. She discussed the research and management of wildlife on the refuge, touching upon the many species of birds that utilize Monomoy as well as horseshoe crabs, the northeastern beach tiger beetle, and seabeach amaranth. The captivated audience expressed its interest in the talk by asking myriad questions when Kate finished her presentation. Thanks to everyone who attended the talk, and thanks to Kate for giving such a wonderful presentation!

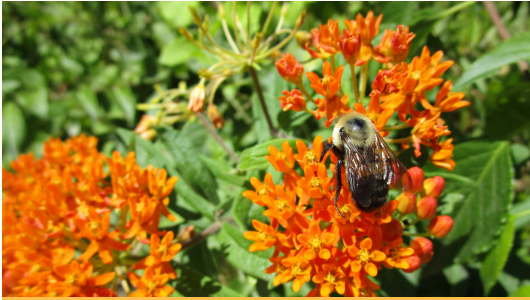


Matt Hillman/USFWS

Kate Iaquinto speaking to a rapt audience

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 6th Pollinator Day



Alyssa Pool/USFWS

A bee on butterfly weed

We will be holding a special Pollinator Day at the refuge from 9 AM - 1 PM. Visitors will have the opportunity to help expand our pollinator garden and learn about the critical role of pollinators in the environment.

August 16th Lecture Series



Friends of Monomoy

Jamie Bassett shellfishing

Jamie Bassett, life-long shellfish and fin fisherman, will be discussing his 3+ decades of experience working on Monomoy at his talk "**A Lifetime on Monomoy.**" The talk will be held in the Chatham Community Center at 7 PM. Sponsored by the Friends of Monomoy. Free and open to the public.

Weekly Nature Walks

Friday-Sunday at 9am and 3pm. Join us outside the doors of the visitor center to learn about the refuge's flora and fauna as well as the cultural history of the area. Wear sunscreen, bugspray, and comfortable shoes to walk on sand. Binoculars available to borrow upon request.

August 18th Marsh Critters Workshop



Ocean Protection Advocacy Kids

Children learning and enjoying nature

Enjoy an afternoon of fun and outdoor education with Ocean Protection Advocacy Kids at the refuge! Participants will learn all about the ecology of Cape Cod marshes. This event is open to families and includes a bus ride to and from Chatham Community Center. Sponsored by Ocean Protection Advocacy Kids. 10 AM - 2 PM, register at opakedu.org/summer-2018

August 19th Lighthouse Tour



Adam Ells/USFWS

Monomoy Point Lighthouse

We are holding our second lighthouse tour of the summer! See the beauty of South Monomoy and learn about the history of the lighthouse in a naturalist-led tour. The tour involves a half-mile hike to the lighthouse with poison ivy and ticks. Admission is \$35, contact adam_ells@fws.gov for more information. Spots are limited, first come, first-served.



Stay connected with updates from our official Facebook Page!